







Pet Dental Health

Pets over 3 years old are very likely to have some early evidence of periodontal disease.

Periodontal disease may not be visible, but it can be painful for your pet and will get worse without proper dental care. Advanced periodontal disease may require tooth extraction, and has been associated with severe health problems, like kidney, liver, and heart muscle changes.¹

“Stinky Breath?”

Buddy’s “dog breath” may not be normal! Watch dogs and cats for early warning signs like:

-  Bad breath
-  Teeth that are discolored or covered in tartar
-  Abnormal chewing, drooling, or dropping food
-  Reduced appetite or refusal to eat



Treatment

Your vet will begin with an oral exam of your pet’s mouth. X-rays will be needed to evaluate the health of the jaw and the tooth roots below the gumline.




Because most dental disease occurs below the gumline, cleaning and evaluation are performed under anesthesia. Cleaning includes scaling (to remove dental plaque and tartar) and polishing, similar to the process used on your own teeth.¹



Prevention

Have your pet’s teeth and gums examined at least once a year by your veterinarian. Avoid anesthesia-free dental cleanings, which don’t allow for examination below the gumline where most problems reside.²

Home dental care is essential. Brushing is best, or you may ask your veterinarian about alternatives like:

-  Special diets
-  Dental treats and chews
-  Water additives, rinses, and wipes



Watch for this VOHC Seal on dental products. The Veterinary Oral Health Council (VOHC) awards its Seal of Acceptance to products that successfully meet pre-set criteria for effectiveness in controlling plaque and tartar deposition in dogs and cats.³

Visit www.VOHC.org to learn more.

Sources

¹ American Veterinary Medical Association <https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/Pet-Dental-Care.aspx>
² American Veterinary Dental College <http://avdc.org/AFD/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/periodontaldisease.pdf>
³ American Veterinary Dental College <http://www.avdc.org/ownersinfo.html>